Washoe County School District

Dorothy Lemelson S.T.E.M. Academy

Classification: 2 Star School

Title I, ≥ 10% of enrolled students are English Learners

2026-2027 School Improvement Plan

District Approval Date:
October 19, 2026

Generated by Plan4Learning.com
November 10, 2026 at 12:07 PM

Mission Statement

All students will develop skills and experiences to reach their fullest potential as critical thinkers and empowered global citizens.

Vision

Dorothy Lemelson STEM Academy will

- set and achieve high expectations for student learning aligned with Nevada Academic Standards at each grade level creating a foundation for educational excellence to graduate high school and be college or career ready.
- use asset-based language to build the social-emotional competencies of each student.
- empower our English Language Learners to meet performance expectations through a language rich learning environment focused on collaborative conversations, academic vocabulary, and writing experiences.
- create opportunities for all students to engage in and experience a high-quality science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education that supports life in the New Nevada and global economy.

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Student Success

Areas of Strength

100% of students are designated FRL so our overall school strengths are the same as for students in the FRL special program.

Using SBAC as reporting tool in math (overall and FRL):

- School proficiency increased by 5% from 21% to 26%; third grade had the highest increase at 14%.
- Overall median student growth percentile increased 7%, from 60 to 67 percentile points.
- Fourth grade had considerable growth moving the student percentile from 47 to 68, an increase of 21 percentile points!

Using SBAC as a reporting tool in ELA (overall and FRL):

- School proficiency increased by 9%, from 21% to 30%; fifth grade students had the highest increase from 17% to 37%.
- Median student growth percentile increased 30 points from 38 to 68 percentile points.
- Median student growth percentile for fourth grade increased 25 percentile points and fifth grade by 35 percentile points.

EL Learners using ACCESS as reporting tool:

- 75% of fourth grade students were level 4 in writing
- 69% of fourth grade students are at a level 4 or higher in reading
- 100% of fifth grade students are at a level 3 or 4 in writing
- First grade co-taught students (classroom teacher and ELF) gained skills with speaking and writing domai
- 75% of second graders are level 4 or higher in reading
- 18% of students exited EL services

EL learners using SBAC as reporting tool:

- Median student growth percentile for EL students increased from 41 to 61; fourth grade from 45 to 67, fifth grade 16 to 55
- Overall math proficiency at level 3 and 4 increased 12%

SBAC results for race/ethnicity in ELA:

- Overall proficiency for the school was 30%; Hispanic students 23% (increase of 6%), White students 44% (increase of 9%); African American students held steady at 20%.
- There are only enough students in grade 4 to report Hispanic students (25/40) who increased 7% in proficiency and 31 points in their median student growth percentile.
- There are only enough students in grade 5 to report Hispanic students (25/38) who increase 11% in proficiency and 41 points in their median student growth percentile.
- Overall, Hispanic students increased their median student growth percentile by 32 points, from 36 to 68; with students showed an increase of 12 points from 41 to 53

SBAC results for race/ethnicity in math:

- Overall proficiency for the school was 26%, with Hispanic students at 21% (increase of 8%).
- There are only enough students in grade 3 to report Hispanic students (14/22) whose proficiency increased by 19% (10 to 29%).
- There are only enough students in grade 4 to report Hispanic students (25/40) who increased 11% in proficiency and 13 points in their median student growth percentile

Areas for Growth

Math continues to be an area for growth for students across grade levels at Lemelson.

Using SBAC Math scores

- While we saw overall proficiency grow 5%, there has been a significant drop in fifth grade. A three-year trend shows proficiency declining, 23%, 19%, 16%. This decline is seen across race/ethnicity and special programs.
- The median student growth percentiles also drop by fifth grade, with our EL populations showing the largest decline at 5 points lower than the overall drop of 10 points.
- Data also indicates the number of students catching up and keeping are showing a decline at grade 5, a significant concern as students move on to middle school and being prepared for algebra.

End of Year Assessment

- Using the end of year curriculum assessment, very few students showed proficiency on the cumulative test suggesting limited retention of math skills.

I-Ready End of Year Assessment

- 21% of incoming fifth graders are proficient in the standards at mid-year and 16% at early on grade level suggesting only one-third of the grade level have prerequisite skills to meet proficiency at grade level without intervention.

EL Students

- Speaking is an area of concern. We have 34 students are 1s and 2s.
- Learning walks suggest student to student discussions are happening, but not with the requirement of utilizing key vocabulary or a structure that holds all students accountable during discussions.
- It is noted that speaking scores often dip before they improve, particularly from kinder to first grade.
-

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Students use of academic vocabulary to articulate content understanding	Increase vocabulary development and speaking opportunities for students; Monitor progress using the WIDA speaking rubric; Provide Teacher PD to understand and use the speaking rubric as well as best practices in pedagogy for speaking opportunities.
Foster/Homeless	Transiency aligns with increasing absenteeism.	Bi-weekly data reviews ensure that these students are not overlooked. Counseling team works closely with families to decrease barriers such as transportation.
Free and Reduced Lunch	We are a school with 100% FRL students. Our focus has been Tier 1 instruction to increase access to grade level standards while reducing the need for interventions.	A math interventionist supports grades 3-5 as a co-teacher and Tier 3 small group facilitator. We have increased intervention time from 3 to 4 days a week while keeping a strong focus on co-teaching to ensure more students are engaged and productive during Tier 1 instruction.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	1. Hispanic students comprise 65% of our school enrollment and it often takes until fourth grade for these students to obtain English proficiency. 2. African American students comprise 10%, white students13%, multi-racial 5%. It is challenging for parents to agree to additional supports such as tutoring, especially if it is an after school. It has also been challenging to implement an active homework program connecting teachers and families to the work done during the school day.	1. A dedicated teacher supports students who are Hispanic and limited English proficient and works with classroom teachers to provide access to Tier 1 and small group instruction to strengthen their English speaking skills. An English language facilitator supports Tier 1 instruction by promoting effective teaching strategies for our second language learners. Students new to the country are provided pocket talks to facilitate conversations in the child's home language. 2. Collaborative teaching teams discuss student academic progress bi-weekly making adjustments to support services every 6 weeks. There is a dedicated math interventionist and a dedicated reading interventionist to support students who are not making progress with Tier 2 classroom supports.
Students with IEPs	19% of our students receive services through the IEP process. A large majority of these students have significant dyslexia which impacts all content areas. The IEP process ensures achievable goals, but the intensive supports needed in the classroom is not being met.	Students on IEPs are included in small group interventions in the classroom in addition to their resource time in their IEP to meet our challenges.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Success Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Students are not attaining proficiency with grade level math standards across multiple measurements.	Students are not engaged in thinking mathematically, and more often than not, wait to be given answers. Students are not able to apply skills to problem-solving situations.
2 ★	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

★ = Priority

Adult Learning Culture

Areas of Strength

- Staff are vested in improving student outcomes in all subject areas.
- Staff meet formally and informally to discuss student needs and plan for student success.
- Staff have adopted Teacher Clarity as a priority to enhance teacher efficacy.
- Staff have studied math standards at each grade level and are aware of the vertical progressions between grades.

Staff learning culture from 2026 Staff Climate Survey

- 100% of staff set high expectations for students' achievement.
- 97% of staff believe students of different social backgrounds get along well.
- 89% of staff have met their students' parents.

Areas for Growth

- Use of data driven instruction and its impact on planning for student learning.
- integration of student needs and expected pacing guides for instruction.
- Using success criteria for progress monitoring and student self-assessment
- Understanding WIDA rubrics for speaking

Staff learning culture from 2026 Staff Climate Survey

- Only 86% of staff believe that parents are partners in the educational process, and that staff frequently update parents about their child's progress.
- Only 21% state parents have asked about ways they can support learning at home.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Accessing the academic language of math	use of GLAD and Ellevation strategies to frontload vocabulary' use academic language in vertical spaces
Foster/Homeless	Transiency and consistent attendance	Consistent contact with families to address barriers
Free and Reduced Lunch	Due to 100% of students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), economically disadvantaged students represent the entire student population. As a result, the goals, strategies, action steps, and supports identified throughout this School Improvement Plan are designed to address the needs of FRL students.	The school will continue to analyze data, monitor progress, and adjust supports to ensure equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Achievement gaps significantly below grade level	Using Title funds to employ a math interventionist to work alongside teachers in Grades 3 - 5 to scaffold learning and close achievement gaps
Students with IEPs	Lack number sense and computational skills	Needs addressed in IEPs with sufficient minutes to support growth; participate in PD with gen ed teachers

Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Our students identified as ELL have low speaking scores across grade levels	Understanding the levels of speaking identified on the WIDA rubric are limited and academic vocabulary instruction is not evident in planning or observation.

★ = Priority

Connectedness

Areas of Strength

- Chronic Absenteeism has been reduced over the past two years.
- Parents are connecting with parents in the neighborhood to carpool allowing our most chronically absent students a wider network of people ensuring they get to school.
- Attendance groups managed by counseling has a positive impact.
- Over 95% of parents attend Fall conferences.
- Strong showing at social events.

Areas for Growth

- Need to build academic connections with families.
- Family events with academic focus have low attendance.
- Parents report students need assistance with organizing and completing classwork at home.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Language can be a barrier.	Use of pocket talks to help with translation; messages go home in Spanish and English; Continue class dojo as primary mode of communication.
Foster/Homeless	transiency	Work with parents to identify non-traditional means of completing homework
Free and Reduced Lunch	Independent skills for time-management and task completion are lacking in our students	Host monthly parent meetings to enhance home-school connection specific to homework
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Independent skills for time-management and task completion are lacking in our students	Host monthly parent meetings to enhance home-school connection specific to homework
Students with IEPs	Expectations may be lower for our students with disabilities than typical students	More communication between resource teacher, gen ed teacher, and parent to construct goals and set expectations

Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Parents report students have difficulty getting organized for school as well as become easily distracted doing school activities at home.	Students lack executive functioning skills to maintain focus and organize themselves.

★ = Priority

Priority Problem Statements

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Students are not attaining proficiency with grade level math standards across multiple measurements.	Students are not engaged in thinking mathematically, and more often than not, wait to be given answers. Students are not able to apply skills to problem-solving situations.
2 ★	Our students identified as ELL have low speaking scores across grade levels	Understanding the levels of speaking identified on the WIDA rubric are limited and academic vocabulary instruction is not evident in planning or observation.
3 ★	Parents report students have difficulty getting organized for school as well as become easily distracted doing school activities at home.	Students lack executive functioning skills to maintain focus and organize themselves.
4 ★	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

★ = Priority

Data Documentation for CNA

Data Documentation for CNA

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

Student Success

- [x] **Criterion-Referenced Test in Mathematics**
- [x] **Curriculum Based Measures**
- [x] **I-Ready**
- [x] **Nevada State Performance Framework (NSPF)**
- [x] **Smarter Balanced (SBAC)**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey, Student Voice**
- [x] **WIDA ACCESS for ELLs**

Adult Learning Culture

- [x] **Administrator evaluation**
- [x] **Evaluation(s) of professional development implementation and impact**
- [x] **Professional Development Agendas**
- [x] **School department and/or faculty meeting discussions and data**
- [x] **Staff surveys and/or other feedback**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey**

Connectedness

- [x] **Attendance**
- [x] **Behavior**
- [x] **Community surveys and/or other feedback**

Inquiry Areas

Inquiry Area 1 Student Success

SMART Goal 1

AB 335 EL Goal: By June 2027, 80% of EL students in grades 1 - 2 will increase their speaking score by 1.0 and students in grade 3 - 5 will increase their speaking score by .5 as measured by the 2027 ACCESS.

Formative Measures: Speaking samples collected and reviewed at 5-week intervals using the WIDA speaking rubric.

Improvement Strategy 1

ELLevations

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Selected dates for PD PD Training Teachers will receive training on the ACCESS speaking rubric to support progress monitoring of students and ELLevation strategies to support improved student growth.	Susan Novelli Misty Larsen	SY 26-27	

Position Responsible: Training - Misty Larsen

Evidence Level

Level 1: Strong:
Ellevation Module

Problem Statements: Student Success 2

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Element: 2.4, 2.6

Status Checks

November **February** **May**

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
2	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

SMART Goal 2

By June 2027, the average number of students meeting their typical growth in math as measured by I-Ready end of year diagnostic will improve from 49% to 55%. By June 2027, math proficiency rates on SBAC will increase from 16% in 2024 to 30% in 2027.

Formative Measures: Data review bimonthly aligned with unit of study
Monitoring of I-Ready lessons completed

Improvement Strategy 1

i-Ready

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Teachers will use math progressions from I-Ready to prepare students for grade level work. Students will use vertical spaces to enhance student discourse during instruction.	Classroom teachers Kris Hugdal, Implementation Specialist Susan Novelli, Principal	SY 2026-27	

Position Responsible: Classroom teachers Kris Hugdal, Implementation Specialist Susan Novelli, Principal

Evidence Level

Level 3: Promising:
i-Ready

Problem Statements: Student Success 1

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 2 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Students are not attaining proficiency with grade level math standards across multiple measurements.	Students are not engaged in thinking mathematically, and more often than not, wait to be given answers. Students are not able to apply skills to problem-solving situations.

Inquiry Area 2

Adult Learning Culture

SMART Goal 1

By June 2027, all teaching staff will demonstrate knowledge of the WIDA speaking rubric to monitor students designated ELL as measured by participation in PD and use of speaking rubric at five-week intervals

Formative Measures: Attendance sheets
Samples of completed speaking rubric
Feedback notations
PLC planning for speaking skills

Improvement Strategy 1

PLC's

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Attendance sheet Exit tickets Classroom observations	Susan Novelli Math committee	SY 2026-27	

Position Responsible: Susan Novelli Math committee

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
PLC

Problem Statements: Adult Learning Culture 1

Status Checks

November **February** **May**

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Our students identified as ELL have low speaking scores across grade levels	Understanding the levels of speaking identified on the WIDA rubric are limited and academic vocabulary instruction is not evident in planning or observation.

Inquiry Area 3

Connectedness

SMART Goal 1

By June 2027, executive function skills observed at home such as organization and limiting distractions during homework will increase by 5 percentage points as measured by the annual Parent Climate Survey.

Formative Measures: Monthly parent tips in newsletter
Attendance/Agenda Coffee with the Principal
Participation in Home Reading Program

Improvement Strategy 1

Family Engagement

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Weekly meetings with truancy and re-engagement office. Contact with families of students approaching chronic absenteeism. Attendance groups and incentives.	Rebeca Alcaraz, counselor Sean Brosius, social worker	SY 2026-27	

Evidence Level

Level 3: Promising:
Family Engagement

Problem Statements: Connectedness 1

Status Checks

November **February** **May**

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Parents report students have difficulty getting organized for school as well as become easily distracted doing school activities at home.	Students lack executive functioning skills to maintain focus and organize themselves.

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Element Summary

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements

1.1 Comprehensive Needs Assessment

For all Title 1 Elements, please see addendum.

Community Outreach Activities

Activity	Date	Lesson Learned
BBQ Open House/Title 1 Presentation	August 22, 2026	Positive experience, 50% of families attended
Morning Mug with Principal	August 28, 202	3 families attended, input provided to increase attendance
Morning Mug with Principal	September 18, 2026	Cancelled, no families showed, combine with social/academic event
PK Advocates Parent Meeting	September 14, 2026	Low attendance, 5 families, increase advertisement